

Reviewing your work

Listed below are **common** mistakes made by students in their history assignments. You can use this checklist to:



- Spot areas where you can improve your work **before** you hand it in.
- Work in pairs and spot ways in which you and your partner can improve your work.
- After your work has been marked by your teacher, decide on targets for your next piece of work.

■ Reviewing written assignments

1 Timing

I rushed my work. I left it too late before I started on the assignment. I did not have enough time to:

- complete enough research
- check my work before handing it in.

2 Misread questions or did not understand them

This meant that I did not answer the question that was actually set! My answer lacked **focus**. I need to be able to work out what the question wants me to do. Breaking down the question into the following areas will help:

- period focus
- content focus – to make sure you stick to the question
- question type and the approach that is needed – look for key words.

For example:

Is it a 'change' question which needs you to look at before and after and then assess the extent of change?

Is it a 'Do you agree ...' or 'How important was ...' question which needs you to look at both sides of the argument before reaching a conclusion?

Is it a 'Why did ...' question which needs you to look at a range of causes/reasons, explain links and say which causes/factors/reasons were the most important?

3 Planning

I did not plan my answer. To improve on this means:

- brainstorming possible information to include
- selecting what is relevant to the question
- organising the information effectively, for example into paragraphs
- being clear on my **line of argument** before I start to answer the question.

4 Failed to provide full explanations

I failed to explain my answers in enough detail and failed to follow through lines of argument. I must prove x was important rather than just say it was! For example, I included the terms of the Treaty of Versailles that made Germans angry but I did not explain why they made Germans angry. I need to use connectives that will extend my answers. For example:

This meant that ...

This resulted in ...

Therefore ...

This led to ...

5 Failed to include enough argument

I included information/facts/evidence but I did not use it to construct an argument. I did not say how important x was or the extent to which x changed or the extent to which I agreed or disagreed with a statement.

6 Failed to support arguments with evidence

I did not support statements with specific, relevant examples (either from sources or from my own knowledge). I must prove rather than say. I need more phrases such as:

For example...

This can be seen in Source...

As Source X shows...

This is supported by...

7 Weak conclusion

I need to answer the question in my last couple of sentences. I could include words from the question in my last sentence. I should end with a clear line of argument, not a detailed summary of everything I have already written.

8 Factual errors

I need to revise more thoroughly so that I do not confuse individuals and I place events in the right time period. For example:

The Wall Street Crash was not in the early 1920s and it did not cause hyper-inflation.

9 Spelling mistakes

I need to check my work for basic errors, especially spelling key historical words or names wrong.

10 Writing style

My ideas/arguments were not always clear because of poor expression or punctuation. I need to aim for short, sharp, clear sentences.

11 Presentation

I need to make sure my writing is legible at all times.